The Midwest Golf Course Superintendents Association (GCSA) has been the main chapter for the Chicago area since local chapters have been in existence. However, back in 1968, a mini-revolution took place when a small group of North Shore superintendents — who wanted to learn more from their association and from their peers — formed the Chicagoland Association of Golf Course Superintendents (AGCS).

"We formed Chicagoland AGCS with the belief to openly share knowledge, ideas and opinions with the mutual trust of fellowship and to continually strive for self-improvement and advancement of our profession," explained Julius D. Albaugh, superintendent at Westmoreland Country Club and the only active charter member in the area. "Simply put, only golf course superintendents can be members of our association."

The Chicagoland AGCS normally meets in the afternoon on the fourth Tuesday, from November through March. From April through October, it meets for evening dinner, usually at a super's club. Twenty or more of the 75 members routinely attend.

"Unless specified in writing, coat and ties are required at each meeting," Albaugh said, adding that the $1 fine for improper dress has never been collected.

At meetings, two topics are the subject of separate roundtable discussions. The subjects are determined by the education chairman. Every superintendent has a chance to actively participate, explained Les B. Rutan, Chicagoland AGCS president and superintendent at Beverly Country Club.

"If over 25 attend, we can't get around the table for every superintendent to participate," Rutan continued. "So the education chairman picks five to 10 superintendents, at random, to participate on both topics for the month. We have guest speakers, from time to time, if we feel there is an important topic that a non-member can contribute to."

Each January, the association plans a tour of three turf care centers in the north, west and southern areas of the city. This is also attended by superintendents' employees, such as assistants and mechanics.

The December Christmas Party meeting traditionally features The Forum, the association's annual "special" education program in a seminar format.

"Guests — such as green chairmen, course officials and assistants — normally attend." Rutan said. "Every two years, we have a budget comparison, usually held in October, where superintendents put their budgets on the table where they are openly shared."

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VERO BEACH, Fla.—Michael Rowe has been named superintendent here at Sandridge Golf Club, a club managed by Lakeland, Florida-based International Golf Management, Inc. (IGM).

Rowe is responsible for complete maintenance of Sandridge’s two 18-hole courses — the 7,000-yard Dunes and the 6,300-yard Lakes. He supervises a staff of 23 and reports directly to Jim Wells, IGM’s central Florida regional manager.

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with the other members. About 95 percent put their names of their budgets, and five percent remain confidential because of course rules. Also included in this comprehensive meeting are superintendents’ fringe benefit and salary comparisons.

“Guests are not allowed at the budget meetings,” Rutan said. Assistants or course officials can be guests, except during the budget meeting.

One member reads the entire “creed” at the beginning of each and every meeting (retired superintendents are members, as well). The block of votes goes entirely with the Midwest GCSA. The Verdure Newsletter comes out monthly, announcing future meetings. It also includes a unique section on “news around town”. No meeting is held in February because of the national conference. Dues are $55. "We are, and have always been, a close-knit group, basing our existence on education, by sharing occupational secrets, by discussing ideas privately as superintendents," Albaugh said.

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